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ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes the career outcomes for the Community College of Philadelphia's (CCP) 2001 career program graduates. In general, CCP's graduates experienced positive career outcomes, despite a very competitive job market. While they were less likely to be employed than their immediate predecessors, those who were employed were more likely to be working in a job related to their CCP studies. The average annual salary earned by 2001 career program graduates shortly after graduation was $38,000, which was an increase of $5,734 over the annual earnings reported by 2000 graduates. Among disciplines, graduates of the Allied Health program earned the highest salaries, followed by graduates of Business, Behavior Science, and Technical programs. Overall, most graduates reported that they valued the career preparation they received while at the College, but some offered suggestions for improving the job preparation experience for future students. These comments can be generalized into four types: (1) affirmations of the College's efforts in the area of career preparation; (2) suggestions related to the quality and quantity of internship and clinical experiences available to students; (3) suggestions related to curricular or course improvements; and (4) suggestions related to technological improvements. Contains six figures and an appendix. (CB)

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# COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF PHILADELPHIA

## Career Outcomes for 2001
## Career Program Graduates

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OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Report #126

October 2002

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**Career Outcomes for 2001 Career Program Graduates**

October 2002

In 2001, the Community College of Philadelphia (CCP) awarded 569 associate degrees and 162 certificates in career-related programs. These numbers represent decreases in career-program graduates from preceding years (Figure 1). Compared with 2000, there were 67 fewer associate degrees and 26 fewer certificates awarded in 2001. There does not appear to be a systematic pattern in terms of degrees awarded within division clusters. Decreases in degrees awarded from 2000 to 2001 were evident for several programs within the Liberal Studies, Business, Science, and Technology divisions.[1]

**Figure 1**

**Number of Associate Degrees and Certificates Awarded in Career-related Programs Academic Years 1996-2001**

| Type of Award | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Associate Degrees** | 700 | 742 | 671 | 699 | 636 | 569 |
| **Certificates** | 159 | 181 | 199 | 175 | 188 | 162 |

Since 1996, the Office of Institutional Research has included a standard set of employment-related items on the questionnaire that is used to survey the College's recent graduates. This survey, which is typically undertaken eight to nine months after commencement, gathers information concerning the graduate's employment status, the relationship of the graduate's job to their program of study, annual salary, and the

[1] See Tables 81 and 82 in the College Fact Book available on the Institutional Research website for the number of degrees and certificates awarded by program.

graduate's assessment of the technological preparation they received while at the College. This report presents this information for 2001 graduates and, when possible, the same information for career-program graduates from 1996 through 2001.

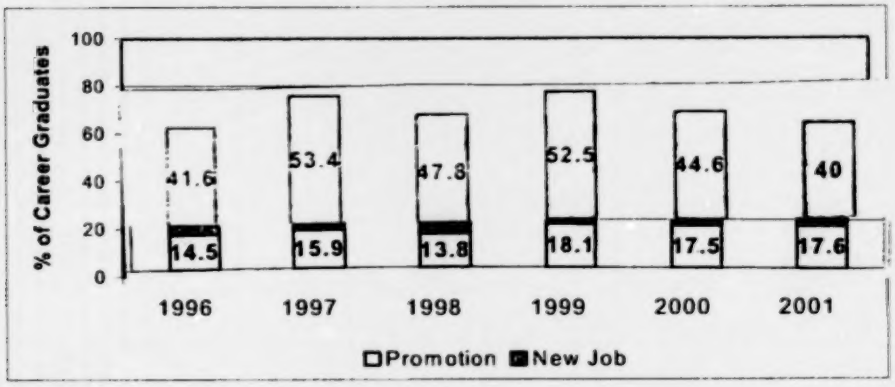
As of October 2002, 178 career program graduates from 2001 returned useable questionnaires. For many of these students, the motivation to participate in higher education was a concern about the lack of future employability. Forty-four percent (44%) of these graduates initially enrolled at the College because of potential or actual loss of a job or concerns about the lack of future job opportunities in their field of employment.

Given the continued economic slump and its projected negative impact on the employment outcomes of recent higher education graduates, it is not surprising that several of the short-term employment-related outcomes experienced by 2001 graduates were less positive than the outcomes of their immediate predecessors. However, it was surprising to learn that in several respects the employment outlook improved for 2001 graduates.

Compared with graduates from 1996 to 2000, a smaller percentage of 2001 graduates were working in a new job with a new employer. While 45% of 2000 career graduates were working in a new job at the time of the survey, 40% of 2001 career graduates were doing so (Figure 2). The percentage of graduates who received promotions subsequent to graduating was nearly identical across the last two years. In combination, nearly 58% of 2001 career graduates were working in a new job a short time after graduation.

**Figure 2**

**Percentage of Career Graduates Who Were Working in a New Job or Received a Promotion Shortly After Graduation 1996 – 2001**




On a positive note, graduates of career programs in 2001 were more likely (68%) than graduates in 2000 (63%) to be working in jobs that were related to their programs of study (Figure 3). On the other hand, graduates in 2001 were less likely than their predecessors to be working in an unrelated job and more likely to have been actively looking for employment at the time of the survey.

The average annual salary earned by 2001 career program graduates shortly after graduation was nearly $38,000 (Figure 4). This represented a significant increase of $5734 over the annual earnings reported by 2000 graduates.



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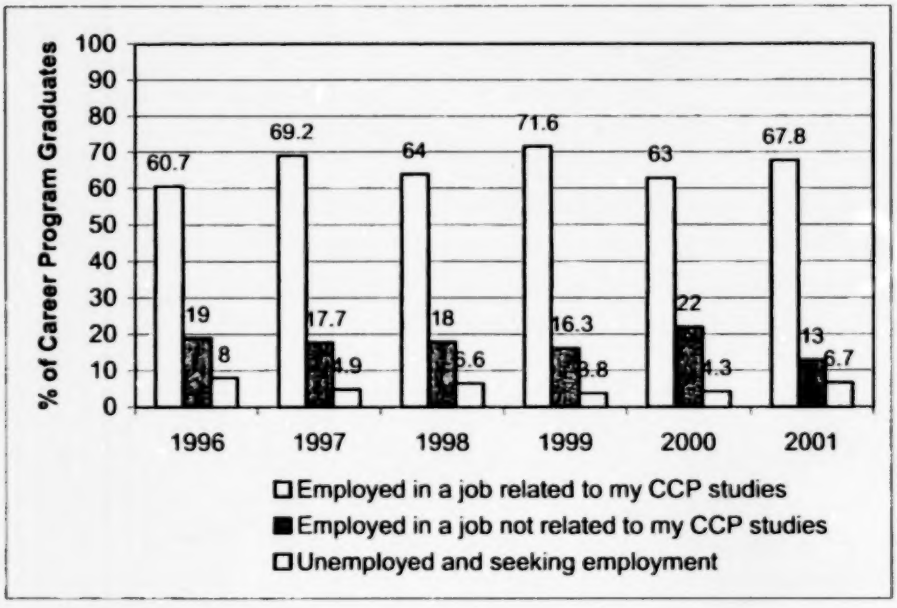
**Figure 3**

**Relationship of Job to Program of Study and Unemployment Status 1996 - 2001**




Annual average salaries for 2001and 2000 graduates were calculated separately for graduates of four program clusters: 1) Allied Health, 2) Behavioral Sciences, 3) Business, and 4) Technical. The data in Figure 5 indicate that, on average, Allied Health program graduates earned the highest salaries across the program clusters, followed in magnitude by graduates of Business, Behavioral Science, and Technical programs.

**Figure 4**

**Annual Salaries of Graduates Working in Full-Time[2] Jobs**
**1996 - 2000**

| Grad Year | Mean |
|---|---|
| 1996 | $27,534 |
| 1997 | $26,402 |
| 1998 | $30,592 |
| 1999 | $30,980 |
| 2000 | $32,189 |
| 2001 | $37,923 |

**Figure 4**

**Annual Salaries of 2001 and 2000 Graduates by Program Cluster**

| Program Cluster / Graduation Year | Mean | Minimum | Maximum |
|---|---|---|---|
| Allied Health | | | |
| 2001 | $40,528 | $20,800 | $66,000 |
| 2000 | $37,636 | $15,400 | $72,800 |
| Behavioral Science | | | |
| 2001 | $35,185 | $12,000 | $58,500 |
| 2000 | $31,702 | $10,400 | $80,000 |
| Business | | | |
| 2001 | $37,290 | $20,800 | $61,000 |
| 2000 | $34,620 | $14,180 | $59,600 |
| Technical | | | |
| 2001 | $29,550 | $15,000 | $54,440 |
| 2000 | $25,088 | $14,540 | $42,000 |

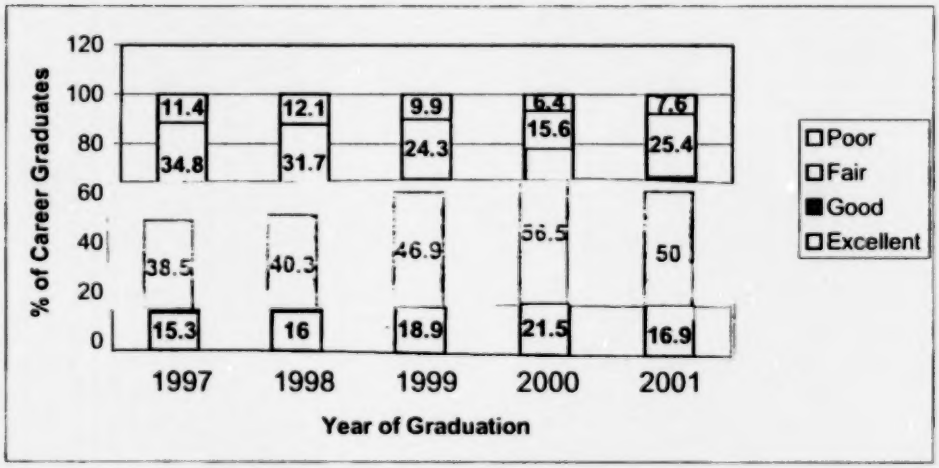
[2] Full time employment was defined as 30 hours or more per week.

Overall, most graduates value the career preparation they received while at the College. Only one student felt their career preparation at the College was poor.

When asked specifically about their computer technology preparation, two-thirds of 2001 career program graduates were very positive in their assessment of the College (Figure 6). Half felt the College did a "good" job in providing them with the computer skills they require for their job. Another 17% felt their preparation was "excellent". While these numbers represent a drop from the levels associated with graduates in 2000, the 2001 levels exceeded those for graduates prior to 2000.

**Figure 6**

**Career Program Graduates Assessment of their Computer Technology Preparation for the Workplace 1997 - 2001[3]**




[3] This question was not included on the 1996 questionnaire.



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Several career program graduates provided thoughtful suggestions for improving the job preparation experience for future students. These comments, which appear in the Appendix, can be categorized into four general types: 1) affirmations of the College's efforts in the area of career preparation; 2) suggestions related to the quality and quantity of internship and clinical experiences available to students; 3) suggestions related to curricular or course improvements; and 4) suggestions related to technological improvements.

In general, 2001 CCP career program graduates experienced positive career outcomes, despite a very competitive job market. While they were a little less likely to be employed than their immediate predecessors, those who were employed were more likely to be working in a job related to their CCP studies. This may account, in part, for the spike in annual salary reported by 2001 graduates.

# Appendix

## How could your CCP education have been more helpful to you in preparation for your current job?

### Positive comments with no suggestions for change

| |
|---|
| It could not have been any better. The nursing program is excellent and employers also know this! |
| My training at CCP prepared me for my current job and successfully passing the NCLEX exam. |
| The staff there was great! |
| CCP prepared me to perform my job but a BA was required for me to advance in the corporation. |
| Has been excellent. |
| The CCP education did prepare me for my current job. |
| I can't think of any way at this time. |
| It was sufficient |
| The education received at CCP was very useful in my prior job as an office manager for a law firm. |
| It couldn't have been more helpful. |
| My teachers in the Justice Department, especially Mr. Tom Doyle and Mr. William Love, prepared me 100% completely for my current job. I could not have asked for more. |
| It was everything that I had wanted. |
| It could not have. |
| I am satisfied. |
| It was great! |
| It helped me sharpen my document processing abilities. |
| Helped somewhat |
| I couldn't have gotten a better education anywhere else. |
| Adequate |
| I think I was well prepared. |
| It couldn't have been. My training helped me be well prepared for my new job. |

### Suggestions related to internship/clinical experiences

| |
|---|
| Broader curriculum and available internships |
| More practice time- otherwise nothing |
| I felt that my clinical experience could have been better. |
| Perhaps an internship could have been included. |
| More clinical experience; however, I realize that each institution will orient employees to their system. |
| CCP could have offered me internship in my career field. |
| More focus on actual clinical experiences would have eased transition |
| More clinical time - longer hours on the floor - more rigorous |

### Suggestions related to curriculum/course improvements

| |
|---|
| I needed better information on electives and graduation requirements. Make core course schedule more rigid. Offer less choices. |
| I was given passing - even good - grades in subjects in which I didn't do passing-level work. Had my grades better reflected my actual ability, I would have known sooner that I did not have the potential to pass the screenings by the 2 agencies in this area I had hoped to work for. |



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|---|
| The courses (new) that are offered presently should have been offered years ago. CCP is a little slow compared to some community colleges. |
| The nursing program did not incorporate Home Care in the program. |
| Implement more courses in child and adolescent psychotherapy. |
| ECE Program needs a computer requirements class as part of graduation credits. (How to teach computers to young children.) |
| A course on equipment repair would have been helpful. |
| Staffing issues, management and supervisory issues, scheduling issues |
| More specific training in my field. CCP is great because it does have a focus in D & A, children & elderly services, however, I work with retarded people. |
| More classes in the hotel field. More options in what classes to choose for each semester. |

**Suggestions related to technological issues**

| |
|---|
| Computer work |
| More accounting software. More in-depth with computer software. |
| Networking classes need more hands-on. I know CIS department is working toward more hands-on. |



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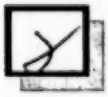

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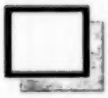

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